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**Second Committee**

**Summary record of the 3rd meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 20 October 2000, at 10 a.m.

*Chairman*: Mr. Niculescu ..... (Romania)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Expression of sympathy regarding the recent floods in India**

1. **The Chairman** extended his condolences to the Government and people of India regarding the tragic loss of human life caused by the recent serious floods.

**Election of a Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur**

2. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the Group of Asian States had proposed Mr. Navid Hanif (Pakistan) for the remaining post of Vice-Chairman and the Group of African States had proposed Mr. Ahmed Amaziane (Morocco) for the post of Rapporteur.

3. *Mr. Navid Hanif (Pakistan) was elected Vice-Chairman and Mr. Ahmed Amaziane (Morocco) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

**Organization of work** (A/55/250 and Corr.2, A/C.2/55/1, A/C.2/55/L.1 and Add.1)

4. The Chairman recalled that, at the last meeting of the Committee, on 20 September, a number of delegations had expressed concern with the clustering of item 92 "Macroeconomic policy questions: (d) Science and technology and (e) Financing of development including net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries". He therefore suggested the following amendment to the Committee's programme of work (A/C.2/55/L.1 and Add.1): the morning meeting on Friday, 6 October, would be allocated to sub-item (e) and the afternoon meeting of 6 October and the morning meeting of 9 October would be allocated to sub-item (d).

5. *It was so decided.*

6. **The Chairman** said that, as discussed at the previous meeting and after informal consultations, the Committee would hold, at 10 a.m. on 16 October, a video link with the high-level meeting of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board to be held in Geneva. The secretariat was preparing an information note on the schedule of special events which would be distributed shortly. Those events would also be announced in the Journal. After consultations within the Bureau, the secretariat had distributed a paper on the distribution of responsibilities among the three Vice-Chairmen.

**General debate**

7. **The Chairman** said, rather than make a long introductory statement, he would prefer first to hear delegations and then make his concluding remarks, highlighting areas of consensus. Within the context of the general debate, which was a well-established tradition within the Second Committee, he invited delegations to reflect together on the current status of the dialogue on international economic cooperation, the objectives to be achieved, current concerns and the possibilities of coming together to achieve concrete progress in the Committee's work. The general debate came at the end of a year marked by numerous important events which could provide an opportunity for reflection on the impact of documents adopted or positions expressed at meetings such as the South Summit held in Havana in April, various special sessions of the General Assembly, the G-8 Summit, the ministerial meeting of the Economic and Social Council, the meeting of the Bretton Woods institutions and the Millennium Summit.

8. **Mr. Adekanye** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, at the beginning of the new millennium, the work of the Second Committee demanded sober reflection on the development experience over several decades. Answers were needed on why the great promises made and the expectations of the peoples of the world remained unrealized. In the face of current global realities, it was necessary to determine what the priorities should be and how the United Nations should be strengthened to enable it to face old and new challenges of development, challenges that ranged from worsening poverty to crushing external debt, and from globalization to unemployment, which had been further compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the spread of other infectious diseases.

9. Those and other global issues had been discussed at the Havana Summit at which participating countries had renewed their commitment to the goal of development and had also charted a new path as reflected in the declaration and programme of action adopted. Participants had also resolved to forge new partnerships with the industrialized nations. They had demanded equal partnership in decision-making affecting the whole of humanity. They had also demanded the creation of a new international financial architecture which would strengthen the share of developing countries in the emerging global economy.

10. Undoubtedly, the new millennium would continue to be shaped by the twin forces of globalization and liberalization, with information and communication technologies as their driving force. But it could not be accepted as self-evident that the benefits of globalization should be confined to a few industrialized economies, while developing countries wallowed in poverty. The recent financial crisis in South-East Asia had shown that even the best-performing economies of the developing countries were unable to withstand the impact of globalization. Yet the effects were particularly noticeable in the developing countries of Africa and in the least developed countries where the standards of living of the majority of their peoples had been adversely affected. The challenge before the Committee was to ensure that globalization, with the tremendous opportunities that it offered, went beyond the integration of developing countries into the global economy and trade.

11. Given that the defining characteristics of the twenty-first century economy were based on information and communication technologies, access to and a share in the returns from those technologies would be a crucial factor in the integration of developing countries in the global economy. Regrettably, the debate on extending those technologies had so far not gone beyond observing the growing gap in access to them. That was why the Group of 77 supported the work of the United Nations Digital Task Force and the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Informatics.

12. The heavy debt burden had become the greatest obstacle in tackling underdevelopment in developing countries. That was why those countries welcomed the efforts to resolve the debt problem and in particular various initiatives, including the reinvigoration of the heavily indebted poor countries initiative. However, it was manifest that those initiatives had not fundamentally tackled the problem. Bold and decisive action was required to cover all categories of debt and there was an urgent need to cancel the debt of developing countries to enable them to revamp their economies and address urgent social and economic problems.

13. There was a dire need for renewed commitment by the international community to give priority to the development needs of the least developed countries. It was for that reason that the Group of 77 welcomed the progress achieved at the first session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries. The Group of 77 fully endorsed the proposal to convene a meeting of the Preparatory Committee and urged the international community to translate its political commitment into special initiatives enabling least developed countries to overcome poverty.

14. The HIV/AIDS pandemic and other contagious diseases posed a tremendous challenge to the health and security of mankind. Their negative impact was already evident in a number of developing countries, including in Africa. The Group of 77 intended to play an active role at the Special Session of the General Assembly to address those problems scheduled for September 2001.

15. The continuing decline of resources for implementation of the agenda for development had adversely affected the various programmes of developing countries. The Group of 77 was committed to the success of the International and Intergovernmental High-Level Event on Financing for Development to be held in 2001 and urged all countries to participate actively in the preparatory process and in the conference itself. The participation of all stakeholders was also essential.

16. The Group of 77 was concerned by the lack of progress in implementing the principles and commitments adopted in Rio, particularly in the areas of financial resources, capacity building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on concessionary terms. In the view of the Group of 77, the Rio+10 process should focus on identifying obstacles to the implementation of Agenda 21. Under no circumstances should the conference be used as a platform for the renegotiation of Agenda 21. If the principles enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change were to be fully implemented, the developed countries must take urgent and effective steps to honour their commitments, principally in the areas of transfer of technologies, capacity building and official development assistance. Those questions should be treated with the same urgency and at the same pace as those of interest to developed countries.

17. Of course, there were other environmental issues with which many developing countries must grapple, including desertification. The lack of resources to support the implementation of the United Nations

Convention to Combat Desertification was a source of concern. The time had come to accord that Convention the same high profile given to other conventions on the environment. The forthcoming Conference of Parties to be held in Bonn in December 2000 would provide the international community with an opportunity to demonstrate its interest and commitment in that regard.

18. Finally, the stability, and indeed the growth, of an increasingly integrated world economy demanded that the countries of North and South should forge a genuine partnership for development. The Millennium Declaration provided the road map for such a partnership.

19. **Mr. Doutriaux** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) and the other associated countries (Cyprus and Malta), said the Millennium Summit had provided a unique occasion to reaffirm the international community's support for the United Nations' universal missions. The final Declaration of the Summit (A/RES/55/2) should be seen as an action plan for the future, particularly for the Second Committee. The international community must show itself equal to the hopes expressed and do its utmost to achieve the goals of strengthening the United Nations capacity for action, particularly in assisting development; ensuring that globalization had a human face and that its benefits were more equally shared; and reducing the growing gap between rich and poor countries, giving priority to the least developed countries and the special problems of Africa. In that context, while emphasizing the importance of complementarity between various sources of financing for development and the primary role of domestic financing, the European Union fully recognized that official development assistance was indispensable and reaffirmed the need for all donor countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP.

20. Major conferences and the regular sessions of United Nations bodies must enable a response to be made to the primary overall objective reaffirmed at the Millennium Summit, i.e. halving world extreme poverty by 2015. The United Nations' role in development was fundamental. At the special ministerial meeting convened by the UNDP Administrator on 11 September 2000, strong political support had been expressed for the United Nations operational development activities. The European Union, whose gross domestic product represented slightly less than 30 per cent of world GDP, supplied about 54 per cent of overall official development assistance and provided half the funding for operational development activities. The United Nations must continue the efforts made to improve the efficiency of those activities, both at Headquarters and in the field, so as to ensure that each agency, fund or programme operated only in the areas in which it had an undeniable comparative advantage and to prevent any overlapping of activities.

21. In the fight against poverty, it was essential to take account of the specific problems of Africa. Poverty could not be defined simply as lack of income and financial resources, but included the concept of vulnerability. That covered factors such as exposure to natural disasters and inadequate access to education, health, natural resources (especially water), employment, basic infrastructure and information and communication technologies. Strategies to reduce poverty must incorporate all those dimensions and their priority aims must be the consolidation of democratic processes, peace-building and conflict prevention and the strengthening of institutional structures for good governance. Respect for human rights and equality between men and women made a powerful contribution to the emergence of a stable environment conducive to the promotion of human development.

22. The United Nations role in the fields of conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in post-conflict peace-building, was vital to the overall success of development efforts. In that regard, United Nations bodies should play their full part in implementing the report of the high-level Panel on United Nations peace operations (A/55/305).

23. Combating pandemics was another of the major challenges to be faced. The European Union accordingly welcomed the prospect of a special session of the General Assembly to further increase political awareness of AIDS. That session should focus on key actions and strategies for maximum impact at the country level and take into account the agreement on the pricing of medicinal products reached in Geneva on 11 May 2000.

24. The Economic and Social Council had the task of regularly appraising and coordinating the implementation of the programmes of action of major

United Nations conferences. Such conferences should not give rise to mechanical, ritualistic review exercises. On the contrary, it was important that monitoring should lead to more robust application of the measures adopted, effective renewal of aims and rational use of resources and that the intervals between reviews were appropriate. That would be achieved only with the involvement and commitment of everyone; State representatives, experts from all countries and civil society in general.

25. The European Union was determined to play an active part in preparing for the forthcoming major United Nations events. The special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the world programme on housing and human settlements adopted at the Istanbul Conference in 1996 should not be the occasion for reopening points agreed to in Istanbul, in particular the right to decent housing and the subject of the sustainable development of human settlements in an increasingly urbanized world. As always for such processes, the European Union supported the participation of the representatives of civil society, and particularly of local authorities, in the preparation of the special session.

26. In 2002, the Rio+10 Summit would be the occasion for reaffirming the commitment of the participating countries to sustainable development around the environmental, economic and social pillars. It should address two key international development targets: that all countries should have a sustainable development strategy in place by 2002 and that those strategies should be implemented by 2005, so as to ensure that current trends in the loss of environmental resources were reversed at both global and national levels by 2015. The Summit should identify measures in areas where further efforts were needed to implement Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the Rio Conference. It should also stimulate reflection on the question of improved international environmental governance.

27. Also of great importance was the High-Level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, which should lead to better mobilization of national and international resources and greater coherence between policies to achieve international development targets. It should also promote more effective cooperation between all those involved in development. The European Union wished to emphasize the importance it attached to taking account, through the agenda drawn up by the Preparatory Committee, of the special needs of Africa and of the least developed countries, and to the need for good governance for the mobilization of resources.

28. The European Union was deeply committed to helping the least developed countries (LDCs). As their main trading partner, it had opened its market very widely to their products and intended to go even further in that direction. Furthermore, it was already the largest provider of official development assistance to the LDCs and was determined to do its utmost to ensure the success of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The central aim of that Conference should be to contribute to the eradication of poverty, including by promoting the integration of the least developed countries into the world economy. Those countries should be encouraged to continue their efforts to identify their needs and define their development strategy, while ensuring the coherence of their approach with poverty reduction strategies and a comprehensive development framework. Control by the recipients of their development processes, introduction of regional dialogue and the active participation of civil society, including the private sector, were of prime importance. For its part, the international community as a whole must also mobilize and demonstrate its capacity for concerted action in the interests of the LDCs by giving them the necessary assistance.

29. The special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children would provide an opportunity to undertake renewed commitments and consider future action for children in the next decade. The European Union also attached the utmost importance to the follow-up to the 1996 World Food Summit and to preparations for its mid-term review scheduled for 2006.

30. The enhanced initiative for the heavily indebted poor countries was an essential component in combating poverty in the developing countries. It was important that accelerated implementation of that initiative should allow the recipient countries to mobilize resources for poverty reduction, but also to promote the rule of law and human development. Accordingly, those countries eligible should take the necessary political and economic measures to begin that process. In addition, the creditor countries which had not yet done so should participate in the funding of the initiative. The European Union would see to it that

the financial effort made in the context of the initiative was not at the expense of other channels of development assistance.

31. Concern for the well-being of future generations through promotion of sustainable development must be given increased attention. Regarding the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the European Union stressed the importance of a regime of sound observance and progress in the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. It undertook to carry out specific cooperation activities with developing countries as part of a comprehensive policy to combat greenhouse gas emissions. In that context, it reaffirmed the importance of prompt ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by States Parties. Furthermore, the European Union supported the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and stressed the importance of the issue of energy and sustainable development to be discussed at its ninth session. It supported the role of Preparatory Committee entrusted to the Commission at its tenth session and also wished to welcome the upcoming establishment of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

32. Finally, at the Millennium Summit, the Secretary-General had drawn attention to the advantage of extending the circle of discussion partners to include the private sector, civil society organizations, local authorities, members of parliament, associations and education networks. The European Union supported in that initiative as it was convinced that such extended partnerships would stimulate the emergence of a participatory and accountable democracy. The European Union was also convinced that their support and their involvement in the work of the United Nations would be a source of efficiency and progress on the way towards a fairer distribution of the fruits of globalization.

33. In conclusion, he reiterated the particular importance attached by the European Union, in the framework of the efforts to rationalize the work of the Second Committee, to the observance of deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions.

34. **Ms. Møjedal** (Norway) said the Millennium Assembly afforded the international community an opportunity to renew its collective commitment to action, to dedicate itself to multilateralism, to commit itself to a strengthened United Nations and finally to recommit itself to poverty eradication as the number one global priority. In doing so, it should be frankly recognized that setting targets was not enough. If the target of reducing poverty by half by 2015 was to become more than fine words, a broader response must be adopted and additional action taken: set the benchmarks, overcome barriers and focus on results.

35. The key was to ensure that the process of globalization was steered so as to yield positive results for developing countries. The opportunities it offered must be exploited in order to conquer poverty and its risks reduced so that the poor were not marginalized. It was therefore necessary to invest in the United Nations, which should claim its rightful role in the debate on managing and financing global public affairs.

36. Improved market access for developing countries was increasingly recognized as part of economic and social development. The international community had learned from the meeting in Seattle. The next round of trade negotiations must be a development round. The United Nations must be strengthened to enable it to play its rightful role in partnership with the Bretton Woods institutions, based on recognition of the strengths and potential of each institution. The ongoing efforts of many countries to develop their own strategies for poverty reduction must be supported, but development must come from within.

37. Financing of development was essential. Her Government was determined to go beyond the 0.9 per cent of GNP currently allocated to official development assistance (ODA) to reach a full 1 per cent and would also significantly increase the share of ODA being allocated through United Nations bodies. Her Government had set that target not to stand out as a donor, but because it strongly believed that all nations should contribute in accordance with their capacity. Quite clearly that was currently not the case. In order to combat poverty effectively, the United Nations must have sounder and more predictable financial resources, the opportunities afforded by globalization must be exploited, the poor must be included instead of marginalized and innovative private-public partnerships must be forged to mobilize additional energies and resources. Accordingly, her Government intended to play an active role in the preparation of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. In cooperation with UNCTAD, Norway would invite all LDCs to attend a conference in Oslo in January 2001 to discuss the role of the private sector in the war against poverty. Moreover, her

Government had recently pledged US$ 110 million to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization as part of a partnership aimed at saving the lives and protecting the health of some 25 million poor children who annually failed to receive immunization against easily preventable diseases. Those initiatives should not be seen as an attempt to undermine the authority of the United Nations but, on the contrary, as additional vehicles to enhance the legitimacy and influence of the Organization.

38. Another priority was to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to make use of innovations in information and communications technologies. Norway supported the Economic and Social Council's Ministerial Declaration on those technologies and the establishment of the United Nations Digital Task Force. Norway had also provided support for the high-level panel of experts on information and communication technologies.

39. A more development-friendly international framework for trade and investment was absolutely necessary to promote sustainable development. Similarly, full and equitable financing of the initiative for heavily indebted poor countries was a litmus test of the international community's ability to stand by its word. Needless to say, making the international environment more conducive to development and poverty eradication would be futile in the absence of good governance at the national level.

40. In any concerted action, the division of labour among the multilateral institutions must be clear. Currently however, it had become more blurred. Partnership required complementarity. The conference on financing for development would provide an excellent opportunity to create synergies. Her Government hoped that the conference would be a launching pad for renewed cooperative efforts and multilateralism in the age of globalization.

41. Norway looked to UNDP to help promote development and reduce poverty worldwide. UNDP enjoyed the confidence of programme beneficiary countries and was a key dialogue partner. Norway, already by far the largest per capita contributor to UNDP, would substantially increase its support to it.

42. In response to the Secretary-General's appeal in his millennium report (A/54/2000), in which he drew attention to the devastating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, her Government had decided to double the funding for AIDS programmes and to participate more broadly in dealing with the challenges of AIDS linked to poverty.

43. Regarding the interrelationship between peace and development, the report of the high-level Panel on United Nations peace operations (A/55/305) contained many useful proposals which should be acted on. There, as elsewhere, there was a widening gap between the tasks of the United Nations and its resources. That gap must be closed through the necessary reforms to achieve a stronger and more relevant United Nations system. The most immediate and direct way to win the trust of countries was to demonstrate the effectiveness of United Nations activities in the field at country level. Both in the field and at Headquarters, pooling of resources and joining of forces should be the watchwords.

44. The war against poverty must be waged on every front, but the forces engaged in the battle on the various fronts must be coordinated through the strategies jointly hammered out in the United Nations.

45. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that most of the concerns of the previous decade continued to need priority attention. For a number of years, the United Nations had been examining in some detail the economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions of globalization, the debate over the costs and benefits of which had intensified. Clearly, without strong corrective actions by Governments, globalization would increase inequality and the risk of social and political instability would erode the acceptance of globalization. The developing countries as such had limited ability to take corrective action and it was for the developed countries, as the major beneficiaries of globalization, to act.

46. There had been an increasing disparity in the distribution of benefits and risks of globalization, both within and among nations. At the 10th session of UNCTAD, held in Bangkok in February 2000, it had been recommended that the benefits of globalization should be more widely shared both within and among countries. It had been emphasized that the most vulnerable countries needed the most attention. In the Plan of Action agreed upon at that session, a number of proposals had been made to enhance the capacity of the developing countries to meet the challenges of globalization. That process could bring benefits if the international community redressed the imbalances in

the global economy. Bilateral and multilateral efforts would be needed to safeguard the vulnerable populations.

47. In the international trade of goods and services, the least developed countries were becoming increasingly marginalized. Over the past decade, world exports had almost doubled, but in 1998 the share of the least developed countries, which represented 10 per cent of the world population, had been less than in 1980. After the Uruguay Round, it had been estimated that the new trade agreement would lead to an increase in global income of some $200 billion to $500 billion, but to a net loss of $600 million a year for the least developed countries, which had already suffered considerable damage. Immediate steps were therefore needed to reverse that situation.

48. Foreign direct investment was often prescribed as an alternative to external assistance, ignoring the fact that a certain level of institutional and infrastructural development was a prerequisite for attracting foreign capital inflow. The lion's share of world foreign direct investment went to the industrialized countries. The 48 least developed countries had attracted about 0.4 per cent of the total of such resources.

49. Official development assistance (ODA) continued to be the largest component of external finance to low-income countries. However, it currently represented less than 0.2 per cent of the total GNP of OECD Development Assistance Committee countries, far short of the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent for the developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent for the least developed countries. At the special session of the General Assembly on Social Development held in Geneva, a number of developed countries had pledged to work towards the agreed ODA target. However, what was needed was a definite time frame and decisive action to honour those pledges. The impact of declining aid was strongly felt by the poor countries, which must service their debt from minuscule export earnings. A number of widely publicized debt relief initiatives had done little to improve the conditions of debtor countries. Many poor countries still spent more on debt servicing than on health and education. Many countries had long been paying out more in servicing debt than they had received in aid, leaving little of their resources for investment in the social sector.

50. He called on development partners to consider the proposal of the Secretary-General in his report to the Millennium Assembly (A/54/2000) recommending the adoption of a new approach for handling the debt problem of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs). The main components of that approach should include immediately cancelling the debts of countries that had suffered major conflicts or natural disasters; expanding the number of countries covered by the scheme by allowing them to qualify on the grounds of poverty alone; and pegging debt repayments at a maximum percentage of foreign exchange earnings.

51. The major United Nations conferences of the 1990s had brought a better understanding of the issues involved in social and economic development. Programmes of action had been drawn up and five-year reviews of some of the conferences had been conducted, in the course of which earlier commitments had been renewed. However, concrete outcomes had remained elusive. It was therefore to be hoped that the forthcoming high-level event on financing for development would address the core issues thwarting the full implementation of the recommendations of the major global conferences and that the necessary political will would be generated. The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in Brussels in May 2001 was of great importance to the least developed countries, but also to the rest of the international community. The marginalization of the poorest countries reflected the failure of global policies. The General Assembly had declared that the international community had the moral obligation to reverse that marginalization and to promote the expeditious integration of those countries into the world economy.

52. **Mr. Bebars** (Egypt) said eradicating poverty and achieving worldwide sustainable development were the responsibility of both North and South, which meant forging a partnership based on international solidarity and the principles and purposes embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the Millennium Declaration. The problems of globalization could produce a real crisis of confidence within populations as a result of increased poverty, poor distribution of income within and between countries and volatility of international financial and commercial markets at a time when the international community enjoyed unprecedented economic and technological resources.

53. He agreed with the Secretary-General that the effectiveness of international institutions needed to be

enhanced and the management of public affairs at both national and international levels improved, which meant that the decision-making process in the international institutions, particularly the United Nations, should become more transparent and democratic to enable all countries to participate in it.

54. It was primarily the developing countries which should take the necessary measures to improve their economic and social situation. However, without an international effort in the economic, trade and financial sectors, those countries would be unable to attain their development targets. That entailed harmonizing United Nations policy with those of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, failing which any efforts of the international community would be fruitless and the targets set at United Nations conferences would be unattainable.

55. Many United Nations resolutions on the economy were not implemented on the ground; that was unacceptable. That situation posed a grave threat to multilateral international cooperation, particularly as the resources available to the United Nations for promoting development were diminishing, as evidenced by the sharp decline in UNDP resources. UNDP was increasingly dependent on resources allocated to specific, limited activities. The resources available to UNFPA were also decreasing, jeopardizing the progress made by developing countries in the health and population sectors since the United Nations Conference on Population and Development in 1994. It was to be hoped that dealing with that situation would not mean changing the system for distributing the Fund's resources and that the developed countries would honour the commitments made at the 1994 Conference and at the special session of the General Assembly held in 1999.

56. Attaining the objective of universal sustainable development was dependent on finding a solution to the debt problem of the developing countries; encouraging the developed countries to liberalize their trade policies, particularly in sectors of importance to the countries of the South, such as agriculture and textiles; stabilizing commodity prices; increasing development assistance; and promoting the transfer of technology so as to narrow the widening gap between North and South, which represented the most serious threat to the developing countries.

57. His Government attached great importance to the high-level event on financing for development to be held in 2001 and hoped that it would succeed in finding the funding needed for third world development. His Government also awaited with interest the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, also to be held in 2001, as well as the start of preparations for the international conference to be held in 2002 to review the targets achieved under Agenda 21, adopted at the "Earth" Summit in Rio in 1992.

58. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) said that, over the last century, humanity had made major strides in fighting hunger, disease, oppression and poverty and had achieved unprecedented levels of prosperity and technological advancement. However, those accomplishments had not improved the lives of a large majority of the world population; in fact, the situation had worsened. The income gap between the richest and poorest had doubled in the last 40 years, with a noticeable worsening during the 1990s. Inequality between countries had risen more sharply than within countries themselves. The situation of developing countries had become even more complicated as a result of the external debt burden, the recurrence of economic and financial crises, declining official development assistance, volatile capital flows and the emerging challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In sub-Saharan Africa, life expectancy had decreased by almost 15 years and the negative effects of underdevelopment on children, women and the environment were very well documented. The recent oil crisis was also posing serious threats to the already precarious economic situation of oil-importing developing countries. The many commitments made at United Nations conferences had failed to mitigate the debilitating effects of underdevelopment. Nevertheless, at the recent South Summit, the leaders of the South had made a resounding commitment to free their peoples from poverty and the ills of underdevelopment, a commitment which had been further reinforced at the Millennium Summit. However, declarations must now be followed by concrete action if people were not to lose faith in the United Nations.

59. Globalization had apparently opened enormous opportunities for development. By 2005, world exports were expected to increase substantially; world trade would increase from 9 per cent to 24 per cent of global GNP by 2010. But those numbers should not obscure

the fact that the impact of globalization was not being felt in the same way everywhere. It was accentuating or reinforcing the existing power structures while creating new ones, as evidenced by the increasing digital divide, rising income inequality and concentration of economic power through mega-mergers.

60. The North controlled the bulk of world finance. Private capital flows were roaming the globe in search of profits. Such flows had completely bypassed a large number of developing countries, particularly in Africa, and the developing world had virtually no say in the way they were managed. The failure of the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle the 1999 spoke volumes about the skewed liberalization of trade. Sectors of interest to developing countries still remained closed to them. The least developed countries, small island developing States and land-locked developing countries were unable to compete with the juggernauts of world trade. Technology remained the exclusive domain of the developed countries, which held 97 per cent of all patents. It was not surprising that 80 per cent of Internet users lived in industrialized countries accounting for only 17 per cent of the world population. The protection of proprietary rights under the intellectual property regime benefited those who already had an advantage in the generation and acquisition of knowledge and technology. Investment flows, whether in the form of foreign direct investment or short-term capital flows, were concentrated largely in some 26 countries. The rest of developing countries had virtually no access to private investment, which was being presented as the only alternative to declining official development assistance. Developing countries were being denied the necessary tools to participate in the benefits of globalization. Their concerted efforts to become full participants in an increasingly interdependent global economy continued to be stymied by asymmetries in the international trading and financial systems. Nevertheless, vulnerability to external factors was a looming menace to their growth prospects. To promote development for all, it was necessary to ensure that distribution of the benefits of globalization was not left to blind market forces driven by a few powerful interests. Moreover, developing countries must also be allowed full and equal participation in international economic decision-making.

61. The international community could give consideration to the idea of global goods in order to reduce global inequalities. At the national level, economic liberalism must be based on social development policy, if it was not to play havoc with social stability. It was a widely known fact that poverty and inequality had been reduced in the developed countries through social measures designed to tame the extremes of market forces. No countervailing public welfare policy existed at global level. Collective action was essential to tame the extremes of market forces and to distribute the benefits of globalization evenly. Enhanced official development assistance, coupled with supportive public policies should help to promote development and eradicate poverty. It served no purpose to set poverty eradication targets without establishing a timetable for the cancellation of external debt, the transfer of technology, access to markets, widespread distribution of investment and enhanced development assistance.

62. Without timely collective action, a backlash against globalization could lead to world disorder and hinder the realization of agreed economic and social development goals, including poverty eradication. The apparent recovery from the 1997 financial crisis should not be a cause for complacency. The fundamental questions about the inherent weaknesses of the system had not yet been answered. The risk of reversal of the tide of prosperity should not be underestimated. If globalization was to bring universal prosperity, immediate concrete steps should be taken to eliminate or minimize negative impacts of market forces, including through enhanced official development assistance; ensure effective and equal participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making; establish international mechanisms to reduce the volatility of commodity prices, including oil prices; cancel unsustainable external debt of all indebted developing countries, particularly in Africa; promote trade liberalization to support the development efforts of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and the small island developing States; and ensure the access of developing countries to knowledge and technology and the transfer of knowledge and technology to them on concessionary terms.

63. **Mr. Kobayashi** (Japan) said the two main themes of the discussions at the Millennium Summit had been poverty reduction and globalization. Firstly, the international community should make every effort to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty

by 2015 and secondly, while globalization had tremendous potential for mankind, it was necessary to ensure that its benefits were made available to all, lest it result in yet a wider gulf between peoples at different stages of development.

64. Bearing in mind those two concerns, three main principles underpinned Japan's development assistance: national control of the development process, whereby each country should assume responsibility for its own development through self-help efforts to create conditions conducive to development; the spirit of partnership between the country providing aid and the recipient country; and the importance of human security, where the life, livelihood and dignity of the individual were the central concern.

65. More specifically, Japan continued to attach high priority to the situation in Africa, where the problem of poverty was particularly severe. Through its series of Tokyo Conferences on African Development, Japan promoted Asia-Africa cooperation, including investment and trade, recognizing that the private sector was the engine of development and, bearing in mind the possibility of a third conference, it was considering holding a meeting at ministerial level in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the Global Coalition for Africa.

66. In order to alleviate the unsustainable debt burden of developing countries, Japan had decided to grant a 100 per cent reduction of both official development assistance debts and other official debts to the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) meeting the required conditions. In addition, to promote the speedy implementation of the HIPC initiative, Japan would make a contribution to the HIPC Trust Fund set up by the World Bank and would assist the countries concerned in preparing their poverty reduction strategy papers. Japan was also helping to finance activities of the United Nations system to enhance human security and intended to make a contribution of approximately $100 million, in addition to the $80 million it had already contributed to the Human Security Fund established by the United Nations in 1999.

67. In addition, there were Japan's continuing official development assistance efforts. Although it had accumulated a substantial fiscal deficit as a result of the prolonged economic slowdown, Japan had been the largest donor of official development assistance for nine consecutive years, assistance representing more than a quarter of aid provided by all industrialized countries. The aim was to assist developing countries to meet their changing needs in a wide range of areas, including information technology. With a view to bridging the digital divide between rich and poor countries, Japan was currently preparing a package funded from official development assistance and other sources and intended to promote future joint efforts of the G-8 countries and the United Nations, in accordance with the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Economic and Social Council in July 2000.

68. Infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, not only threatened the lives of individuals but constituted a serious obstacle to development. At the G-8 Summit, Japan had launched the Okinawa infectious diseases initiative in support of the efforts to combat those diseases by developing countries and international organizations such as WHO, UNDP and UNICEF. With regard to protection of the environment, Japan was working actively to ensure the success of the sixth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and looked forward to engaging at the Rio+10 Conference in 2002 in discussions that would take account of new developments in such areas as climate change, technological innovation and globalization.

69. Finally, Japan would spare no effort to ensure the success of two United Nations conferences on development scheduled for 2001. The first was the international high-level event on financing for development which should consider the mobilization and effective use of a wide range of resources — official development assistance, debt relief, trade and investment and domestic resources — in which all stakeholders should participate, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. The second was the Third Conference on the Least Developed Countries which would provide an opportunity to formulate effective and realistic development strategies and for which Japan would promote cooperation among least developed countries, donor countries and international organizations.

70. **Mr. Valdez Carrillo** (Peru) said that statistics published by the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions showed not only that the world had recovered from the 1997-1998 financial crisis but that

the outlook was very promising because of the growth cycle convergence of the major economies. Gross world product was expected to grow from 3.4 per cent in 1999 to 4.7 per cent in 2000, a truly impressive figure compared with the performance over the previous two decades, the more so given the general framework of low inflation and growing employment, particularly in North America where full employment appeared to have been achieved.

71. However, that growth appeared to be highly uneven as it was concentrated mainly in the advanced economies. It had not been possible to instil the same dynamism into the developing economies, particularly in Latin America, where the overall growth rate of 0.3 per cent in 1999 was the lowest in the world, in spite of the stringent economic reforms implemented over many years such as deregulation, liberalization, privatization and the strengthening of institutions and governance. The international environment had also proved incapable of providing the public benefits required to counteract the uncertainties overshadowing the future of the world economy. On the contrary, in addition to the systemic problems linked to asymmetries in the financial and commercial system, the volatility of capital flows and the imbalances existing in the trade and foreign exchange sectors, there were new potentially destabilizing factors, such as the rising cost of energy, which could result in inflationary pressures and higher interest rates, making the repayment of foreign debt more expensive, with disastrous consequences.

72. In Peru during the 1990s, the average annual GDP growth rate had been 4.6 per cent, one of the highest in Latin America, while inflation had dropped below 4 per cent and was headed towards 1.5 per cent by 2001. Those results had been achieved by a firm commitment to the goals of economic stability and structural reforms aimed at greater transparency and competitiveness, a better allocation of resources and enhancement of the central role of the private sector. The elimination of excessive regulations and barriers had allowed private investment to grow by 5.7 per cent a year, rising from less than 15 per cent of GDP in the early 1990s to 22.5 per cent in 2000. All those efforts, which had also led to greater social expenditures, had not been enough to solve the problem of poverty affecting more than 40 per cent of the population, or to halt the huge increase in unemployment and underemployment, particularly in the manufacturing sector. Merely to absorb the estimated yearly 3 per cent growth of the economically active population, the economy must grow annually at a minimum rate of 6 per cent over the coming years. That assumed stepping up reforms, expanding external savings and attracting greater financial resources and investment. Moreover Peru, as a small poor country, was vulnerable to the impact of various external factors, such as the deterioration in the terms of trade, higher international interest rates, natural phenomena affecting the productive structure and, to an even greater extent, sudden changes in world financial markets within a scenario of increasing globalization.

73. In order to deal with that situation, which was common to all developing countries, the United Nations must be the agent for change and the promoter of a new world consensus enabling the international community to eradicate endemic poverty and generate sufficient sources of employment through sustained and environmentally sound economic growth. That would require the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee to take the lead in a broad movement of cooperation, with the following priorities: formulation of internal policies to promote growth, competitiveness, stability and progress; opening of predictable and secure markets to exports of developing countries, for as the Group of 24 had recently stated, it was unacceptable that the average tariffs applied to exports of the developing countries should be four times higher than those applied by the developed countries among themselves, particularly in sectors such as textiles, clothing and agriculture, which were the most competitive and job-generating sectors of the developing countries; substantial alleviation of foreign debt for heavily indebted poor countries as part of the HIPC initiative; effective use of the "peace dividend" through a sustained and significant increase in official development assistance; greater flows of private capital, particularly foreign direct investment; incentives for the transfer of technology, the creation of private partnerships and the adoption of new financing methods; consideration by the developed countries of the effects of their internal policies on the developing countries in the current context of opening markets and globalization; and reform of the international financial, monetary and trade regimes to promote greater equilibrium between States and effective participation of developing countries.

74. **Mr. Wang Yingfan** (China) said that despite the unprecedented material wealth humanity had created in the 20th century, the gap between rich and poor had widened more than ever. The rapid pace of globalization in the 1990s had caused profound changes throughout the world, but the marginalization of the poor countries had continued. If globalization was to benefit all countries, it was essential to help developing countries to integrate into the world economy and support their efforts to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty. The Millennium Declaration had set out many important goals in that regard; it was for the international community to take concrete measures to achieve them.

75. In order to strengthen effective global governance, it was imperative to strike a balance between efficiency and equity. The Millennium Declaration said clearly that the benefits of globalization were very unevenly distributed. It was important to ensure that globalization became a positive force for all the world's peoples by strengthening effective global governance. For that purpose, the current global economic system must be reformed so as to represent the interests of the majority. Globalization should have a human face; it was important to formulate rules governing it, an undertaking in which the United Nations must play a central role. Equal participation by the developing countries in formulating such rules should be an important component of their efforts to integrate into the world economy. It was also the precondition for a democratic global economic system. Decision-making power in the major multilateral economic institutions had for too long been in the hands of a minority of countries. The voice of the developing countries should be heard in that process and they should no longer accept passively rules formulated by others. An open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system was also needed, as provided by the Millennium Declaration. The United Nations had an important role to play in that regard. Most importantly, it should continue to strengthen dialogue and coordination between relevant bodies of the United Nations system and multilateral economic institutions. In that regard, lessons should be learned from the successful dialogue between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions. The convening of the high-level event on financing for development by the United Nations in 2001 was a very good initiative in that direction.

76. The eradication of poverty represented the most severe challenge to mankind. The Millennium Declaration had laid down a series of goals in that regard and it was crucial for national Governments to adopt sound macro-economic policies, democratize the decision-making process and encourage the participation of civil society. At the same time, international cooperation should also be stepped up, so as to create a favourable international environment for establishing real partnerships between donor countries, developing countries, the United Nations system, multilateral economic institutions, the private sector and civil society. Accordingly, the developed countries should further open their markets to developing countries and help them to build up their capacity and find a comprehensive solution to their external debt problems. The World Trade Organization should make the concerns of developing countries the focus of the following round of multilateral trade negotiations. Concrete measures should also be taken to get rid of the digital divide between developed and developing countries, thus enabling developing countries to have access to information technology for their development and poverty-eradication efforts. The developing countries were at different levels of development. Accordingly, one important condition for their development and integration into the world economy was to choose a road to development suitable to their situation. The developed countries should take account of that reality and refrain from imposing their own economic and social standards and development models. Multilateral development aid agencies should, when making recommendations to a recipient country, thoroughly study that country's domestic situation, fully respect its choice of path to development and avoid imposing on it models or conditions for aid which were not suitable.

77. China's economic success over the past 20 years of reform was attributable mainly to the development path it had chosen, which was appropriate to its national conditions. While still faced with many difficulties, China remained determined to pursue its reforms and establish a more democratic and prosperous society. While dedicated to domestic economic development, China was also ready to promote international cooperation, including South-South cooperation. The Ministerial meeting of the

Sino-African Forum on Cooperation to be held shortly in Beijing should be useful in promoting such cooperation.

78. **Mr. Mauricio Escanero** (Mexico) said the Millennium Summit had provided a unique opportunity for high-level political reflection on the major challenges for the future of mankind. The leaders who had attended the Summit had pledged to achieve specific objectives to ensure worldwide sustainable development and had reaffirmed the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, executive and representative organ of the United Nations.

79. As had been stated at the Summit, globalization must be a positive force for all the world's people. Each country had a role and responsibilities as part of concerted United Nations action for which the international community must mobilize itself. Absolute priority must be accorded to achieving equality, as no one could remain indifferent, either morally or politically, to the widening gap between nations and the grinding poverty of the majority. Moreover, the international economic order must conform to the priorities of sustainable development and social justice, which meant improving education, health, nutrition and infrastructures at global level and enhancing access to scientific and technological advances.

80. In that context, the United Nations could and must help to establish a just, equitable and stable international framework conducive to economic and social development and based on open, dynamic markets enjoying the full potential of the information-based economy. Three major challenges were to be faced in that regard. Firstly, measures must be taken to provide development financing within an economically efficient and socially responsible international financial architecture. In that connection, he welcomed the high-level event to be organized by the United Nations in 2001 as part of its efforts in conjunction with the World Bank and all other stakeholders concerned. That meeting should help to forge a solid global alliance for development and produce coherent and sustainable action in all sectors considered, in accordance with the objectives of the Millennium Summit.

81. Secondly, action must be taken to consolidate the multilateral trading system, promote open regionalism and strengthen economic relations among the various world regions on an equitable basis. In that connection, he drew attention to the appeal launched by Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group in their Cartagena Declaration of June 2000 for a new round of trade negotiations to be held under the auspices of WTO with the aim of removing customs and other non-tariff barriers to goods and services.

82. Thirdly, it was essential to strengthen the positive impact of new technologies on development by promoting the equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization. The United Nations would have a crucial role to play in ensuring the participation of all countries, particularly the developing countries, in devising regulatory mechanisms and institutional frameworks to determine the course of the technological revolution by providing the necessary incentives for technological innovation, with due regard for the priorities of social development.

83. The United Nations must also coordinate international cooperation for the protection of biological equilibrium and diversity. The Rio+10 Conference and the preparations for it must mark the beginning of a collective effort to deal with environmental problems, through the effective application of the principle of joint but differentiated responsibility. The United Nations must also play a leading role in strengthening international cooperation at all stages of the effort to combat natural disasters, from prevention or early warning to emergency relief, recovery and reconstruction.

84. **Mr. Slade** (Samoa), speaking on behalf of the member countries Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that, at its twenty-second special session in 1999, the General Assembly had considered the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and reaffirmed its validity as a framework for the sustainable development of small island developing States. The constraints to which they were subject and the need to provide them with special support had been duly recognized. The outcome of that session marked a significant step forward in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

85. To ensure more effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the small island States must formulate national action plans and environmental strategies, carry out legislative reforms to comply with environmental norms and establish national institutions for sustainable development planning and project implementation. Many of those States had already set

up bodies for that purpose and were conducting impact assessments to protect the environment.

86. At the special session, the small island developing States had called attention to problems encountered and various constraints that had delayed the process of implementing the Programme of Action.

87. The Alliance fully endorsed the principle of partnerships for sustainable development emphasised at the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly. While it was up to small island States to pursue sustainable development, all partners should foster an enabling environment and should live up to their commitment to take further measures to support those States in that regard. There were a number of positive signs, such as the recent signing of the Cotonou Agreement by the European Union and the ACP countries. It was also encouraging that a number of AOSIS countries in the Pacific region had become members of the ACP group. The development of partnerships and efficient coordination between small island States and donor countries would be crucial for the successful implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action. It was necessary to build more concertedly on current efforts, particularly in the areas of capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

88. At its twenty-second special session, the General Assembly had recognized that the small island developing States faced new challenges and new opportunities as a result of globalization, a process which should not be regarded as inherently negative. The opening up of markets, trade liberalization and increased technological advancement were all positive elements. However, they must be applied flexibly, fairly and transparently, with due regard to the social dimension of development, if they were not to result in distortions and a widening of income gaps. The true challenge would be to ensure that globalization did not become an instrument of oppression for small vulnerable communities, but constituted a means of offering real opportunities and improving development prospects. In that connection, AOSIS was planning to hold a workshop on trade, the environment and small island developing States in 2001. The group further felt that it had not received the fullest attention of the United Nations system regarding trade matters and that further efforts were needed in that regard. The Alliance was therefore currently looking at ideas for strengthening the Small Island Developing States Unit in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and was considering making specific proposals at the appropriate time.

89. The sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was to be held shortly in The Hague (Netherlands) and would be called upon to consider a highly complex set of decisions that could strengthen the environmental integrity of the Kyoto Protocol or, in the event of failure, could seriously undermine it. The Alliance would make every possible effort to strengthen that integrity and would endeavour to ensure that the Conference did not result in an overall increase in the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The time had come to provide the small island States and other vulnerable countries with better financial and technical support so that they could take measures to adapt to climate change. The sixth session of the Conference would therefore afford developed countries an opportunity to live up to their commitments in terms of financial and technical support for technology transfer, capacity-building and scientific research in developing countries.

90. AOSIS welcomed the completion of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. In that connection, it was planning a workshop in the near future to ensure that small island developing States were better informed of the implications of acceding to the Protocol and were able to make informed decisions.

91. Capacity-building remained an essential requirement for the meaningful implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and also for enabling the countries concerned to determine their priority requirements. At the AOSIS workshop held in Apia (Samoa) earlier in the current year, capacity-building needs had been considered in detail. The workshop had produced a number of conclusions and recommendations that had been transmitted to the Global Environment Facility. The AOSIS member States had also developed the SIDS/Networking system into a significant tool for sustainable development, but its survival was contingent upon voluntary contributions. Several donor Governments had provided funding, but in the long term, given the key role the network was playing in all member countries, it was essential that the financing of the system should become part of the regular budget of the United Nations.

92. **Mr. Effah-Apenteng** (Ghana) said that, in spite of the growth of worldwide material wealth and the accelerated pace of technological progress, the income gap both within and between nations had never been so wide and deprivation and inequality continued to grow. Half of the world's population currently lived on less than $2 per day.

93. At the Millennium Summit, political leaders had recognized the need for a more determined and radical transformation of the world and an end to poverty and marginalization. Economic projections indicated, however, that those aspirations were likely to remain unfulfilled if the international community did not change its approach to the problems with which it was confronted. In Africa, the growth rate was projected to be 3.5 per cent for the year 2000, far below what was required to reduce poverty there. It was clear that, without bold and urgent measures to address the major problems of financing for development, the gap between rich and poor would continue to widen.

94. With regard to debt relief, the leaders of the developed countries and those of the Bretton Woods institutions had argued that relief without market access would not enable the poor countries to achieve debt sustainability, as the two processes must work in tandem. However, the failure to synchronize initiatives on debt, trade and official development assistance with the adoption of macroeconomic measures had led to reversals in the face of instabilities accentuated by globalization. In such conditions, debt relief was too little, too late. In that connection, it was encouraging that the leaders of the G-8 member countries, at their meeting in Okinawa, had stressed the need to attain the targets set in Cologne and that the annual meeting of the World Bank and IMF in Prague had endorsed a plan to achieve that, although it was only a partial solution to the problem of debt. The only way to reduce poverty, which was the real objective of debt relief, was to cancel debt and implement measures to ensure sustainability for future borrowing.

95. If debt relief was to have an enduring impact, the developed countries would need to take decisive steps to address the concerns of developing countries about the implementation of the Uruguay Round undertakings, particularly with regard to textiles and agriculture. In that connection, the international community would have to take urgent measures to enable the developing countries to diversify their economies and create the conditions for sustained growth and poverty eradication. That would require a partnership of developed and developing countries, WTO, the Bretton Woods institutions and the private sector. Linked to that was the growing gap in private capital flows to various regions of the world. There was an urgent need to set up innovative public-private partnerships through the International Finance Corporation or the Multilateral Investments Guarantee Agency, for example, to stimulate productive investment in developing countries.

96. Clearly, the developing countries bore the primary responsibility for the development of their respective economies. Their ability to ensure effective management capable of eradicating poverty and ensuring sustainable development depended on good governance at home, just as at the global level. Official development assistance should be regarded as a major instrument for supporting good governance in such areas as institution-strengthening and human capacity-building.

97. In order to seize the opportunities afforded by globalization, the developing countries must provide their populations with access to good quality basic education. With the fast pace of global integration quickening the obsolescence of skills of people unable to retrain themselves continuously, more and more individuals in developing countries would continually be relegated to the margins of global society. Education, as the key to the new world economy, gave access to the information revolution which was the driving force of globalization. While the initiatives to bridge the digital divide were to be welcomed, the first step in that direction must be to meet the needs of millions of children in developing countries who did not attend school. The Secretary General should appoint a high-level group of experts to determine the strategies and measures required to meet the objectives of the initiatives in a comprehensive manner. The United Nations should create an alliance with the private sector and universities to conduct research into new information and communication technology products appropriate for developing countries, particularly for educational purposes.

98. The United Nations, in cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions and leading academic institutions, should encourage global thinking on the implications of global solidarity, particularly ways of ensuring that each individual born in the 21st century

enjoyed minimum social protection, including access to basic education and health services.

99. **Ms. Espinoza Madrid** (Honduras) said, with the dawn of the new millennium, the time had come for the United Nations to assess its achievements since its inception and to set itself new tasks for the benefit of mankind. The Millennium Summit had enabled the leaders of Member States to define what the Organization's role should be in the short term. They had agreed that the central challenge was globalization, a process which should bring equity and growth and improve the prospects of all mankind.

100. Among the many achievements of the United Nations were the improvement of socio-economic indicators such as maternal and child mortality, disease control, access to education and housing and protection of the individual and the environment. The United Nations had also been involved in technological progress to which it had accorded priority attention, on the basis that real globalization called for modern technologies to be applied both in towns and in the most remote areas.

101. In spite of those achievements, the modern world presented the United Nations with formidable challenges such as the economic inequalities and extreme poverty seriously afflicting half the world's population, environmental degradation and the negative impact of globalization.

102. The United Nations could implement the new development model defined at the major conferences of the 1990s, without which there would be no peace, prosperity or justice in the world. At the various world conferences, emphasis had been placed on the importance of social policy matters, partly through the participation of civil society, and all components of the international community — the United Nations, multilateral financing institutions, regional organizations and civil society — had been called on to pool their ideas, efforts and resources in order to put the new development model into practice. Although in the past United Nations action had been focussed on ensuring world peace, a role which remained fundamental, it must in future concentrate its efforts on economic and social development which, in turn, was a major factor in preventing international conflicts and civil wars.

103. Regarding ecological issues, Honduras, which was in the forefront of potential victims of natural disasters, attached the utmost importance to protection of the environment, without which the prospects for mankind's survival over the medium and long terms were increasingly jeopardized. The progress achieved in the last 50 years had brought significant growth in the world population and economic production, but overexploitation of natural resources posed a threat to the future of the world.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*